



STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF FORT BEND  
CITY OF RICHMOND

The City Commission for the City of Richmond, Texas met in Regular Session on February 15, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Becky Haas proceeded to call the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. via video conference pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.125, as amended, and as modified by the temporary suspension of various provisions thereof effective March 16, 2020, by the Governor of Texas in accordance with the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, all as related to the Governor's proclamation on March 13, 2020, certifying that the COVID-19 pandemic poses an imminent threat of disaster and declaring a state of disaster for all counties in Texas. All members of the public may participate in the meeting via video conference call.

A quorum was present, with the following members in attendance:

Becky Haas, Mayor  
Terry Gaul, Commissioner P1  
Barry Beard, Commissioner P2  
Carl Drozd, Commissioner P3  
Alex BeMent, Commissioner P4  
Terri Vela, City Manager  
Gary Smith, City Attorney  
Howard Christian, Assistant City Manager  
Laura Scarlato, City Secretary

**Note: This meeting was held during the *February 2021 Winter Weather Event*.**

Agenda item A1. Call to order, Quorum Determined and Meeting Declared Open.

Agenda item A2. Recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag and the Texas Flag. Mayor Becky Haas lead the pledges.

Agenda item A3. Presentations:

- a. Employee Recognition for Service with the City of Richmond.
  1. Michael Kruszynski, 5 years, Public Works Department.
  2. Larry Watson, 15 years, Parks Department.The Mayor acknowledged both employees and thanked them for their continued service to the City of Richmond.
- b. Proclamations
  1. Heart Health Awareness Month. Mayor Haas read the proclamation encouraging

citizens and employees to lead healthier lives and protect their hearts.

c. Presentations:

1. Conditional Use Permit for massage businesses by Joe Madison, Executive Director, Demand Disruption, and Rhonda Kuykendall, Chairwoman, FBC DA Human Trafficking Team. City Manager Vela introduced the presentation which was provided by Ms. Kuykendall with a tremendous amount of information regarding Illicit Massage Business (IMB) in Fort Bend County. There are currently two located in the City of Richmond. Tips for determining which businesses are IMB's versus legitimate massage business were provided such as dark tented windows, prices are below market, open for business at odd hours, only male clients, a door entry buzzer system and advertising on sexual websites. There are more than 9,000 IMB's in the United States with \$2.5 billion annual revenue. In Houston, there are on average 2.869 customers per day between the hours of 12:00 – 2:00 Monday – Friday. This equates to a gross revenue of \$107 million in Houston. Three specific operations that were completed in Cinco Ranch, Missouri City/Stafford and Fulshear/Katy resulted in rescues from sex traffickers. It was suggested that cities in Fort Bend County adopt a Conditional Use Permit that would require strict guidelines making it more difficult for the IMB's to operate. Law Enforcement, Code Enforcement and Inspectors are key to enforcing the restrictions to close down the businesses. The Commission was very receptive to the suggestions. Following a brief question and answer period, the item was closed.
2. Discuss Quarterly Financial Reports. City Manager Vela introduced the item stating this is a draft report since the report isn't normally produced on a quarterly basis. Staff is looking for feedback in order to provide the Commission with what they prefer. The data will be collected from January – March 2021 with a report being provided in April 2021. Finance Director Justin Alderete stated the General and Utility Funds for both revenue and expenses would be reviewed. Sales Tax and Property Taxes make up the majority of the operating revenue. The revenue for water is weather driven with more water being used during the summer heat. Purchasing Services is over budget due to the CARES Act Funds that will be discussed at a later agenda item. Next month there will be carryover budget amendment for the CARES Act Funds. It was discussed whether this report is necessary. The consensus was not to include the Financial Report or Quarterly Investment Report in the consent agenda. Commissioner BeMent who requested the report stated as stewards of the citizens funds, he felt the report needed to be viewed more closely. However, did not want to duplicate efforts. City Manager Vela stated that something would be provided from the Finance Director which would afford the information they need.
3. Discuss Tax Exemptions. Before the presentation, Mayor Haas stated she has been approached by numerous citizens regarding the over 65 and homestead exemptions. Although there is an understanding of the reason the tax rate in the City is high, she would like to offer the citizens some kind of tax relief, possibly in the FY 2022-23. City Manager Vela introduced the item stating the Finance Director Alderete would review the background and

the consequences of those decisions. Finance Director Alderete stated there are four phases of the tax calendar: appraisal phase, equalization phase, assessment phase and the collection phase. The City of Richmond has a small footprint with 4.47 square miles and a large tax-exempt base. The role of the City is to provide a balanced budget. The City takes the property values provided by the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District, which is an independent subdivision of the state, and adopt a rate that is necessary to fund the city services and infrastructure improvements. The exemptions for both state and local were reviewed. The effects of lowering the taxes and the methods used to perform that while maintaining the current revenue stream were reviewed. If the tax base is decreased the property tax values must increase. Various scenarios were provided. There was a brief discussion and the agenda item was closed.

**There was a power outage at this time, it was discussed and decided to conclude with agenda items that were time sensitive or an outside speaker was present. Once a quorum was reinstated, the meeting continued.**

Agenda item A4. Public Comments. There were no citizens signed up to speak therefore, the agenda item was closed. **No comments.**

#### Agenda item A6. CONSENT AGENDA

There were no items pulled for discussion. Commissioner Beard made the motion to approve Consent Agenda items A5. 1-12. Commissioner Drozd seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve.

A5. 1. Minutes – Special meeting held on January 11, 2021, the Regular City Commission Meeting and the Workshop held on January 25, 2021 (copies are enclosed).

A5. 2. Fire Department Report

A5. 3. Police Department Report

A5. 4. Municipal Court Department Report

A5. 5. Tax Assessor/Collector Report

A5. 6. Public Works Report

A5. 7. Planning Department Report

A5. 8. Building Department Report

A5. 9. Code Enforcement Report

A5. 10. Emergency Management Report

A5. 11. Review and consider taking action on a final report to City Commission for a Final Plat – OSP NW 359 Reserve "A" – 4.3164 acres of land – 0 Lots – 1 Blocks – 1 Reserve. The subject site is located on the west side of Mason Road, south of City of Richmond Fire Station 3.

A5. 12. Set date for next meetings. (Regular City Commission Workshop and Meeting on Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.)

## REGULAR AGENDA

Agenda item A7, to review and consider taking action on the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Year Ending September 30, 2020. John Manning, CPA, Audit Partner with Pattillo, Brown & Hill, L.L.P. was present to provide the overview of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Mr. Manning stated the firm had meetings with the City Finance Team and Commissioner Gaul, who serves on the Finance/Bond/Budget Advisory Committee. It was stated that the City is not required to do a CAFR but does so to provide additional transparency. The City has opted to perform a CAFR for the past seven years. This report provides more detail than the annual report. It was stated the City is in a very good position considering the past year being in a pandemic and uncertain times. **The City received an unmodified opinion which is the highest level of assurance that can be given.** Commissioner Gaul asked how Richmond compares to other municipalities and it was stated that the City is in very good shape with the example being given of the employee pension fund. Commissioner Beard, Drozd and BeMent all thanked staff, the management team and Commissioner Gaul for keeping the City operating effectively and efficiently. Commissioner Beard made the motion to approve the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Year Ending September 30, 2020. Commissioner Gaul seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve.

Mayor Haas opened agenda item A5, Second public hearing to receive comments for or against request by Texas Department of Transportation (owner of the subject site) to annex the existing right of way of FM 762 from Dowling Drive to the Brazos Town Crossing. There was no discussion or comments from the public. The agenda item was closed.

City Manager Vela stated the meeting would resume with the same agenda on Monday, February 22, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

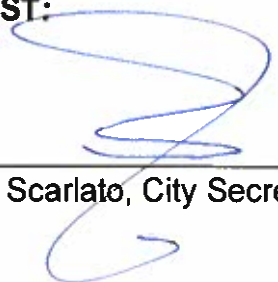
With no further business to discuss, Mayor Haas declared the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

**APPROVED:**



Becky K. Haas, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Laura Scarlato, City Secretary